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THE SITUATION IN CHINA

A RECORD OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

BY

ROBERT E. SPEER

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ROBERT E. SPEER

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MISSIONS AND POLITICS
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The Situation in China

A RECORD OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

BY

ROBERT E. SPEER

This article has been republished from a larger work, "Missions and Politics in Asia," as it was deemed expedient to put this chapter in concise form for popular reading.

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Introduction

This is not a favorable time to form a judgment of China. The disturbed condition of the country, the anxiety felt in Western lands as to the safety of their representatives, the heat of passion aroused by bloodshed, even in the absence of declaration of war, combine to distort our view. Yet every one is interested in China now, and many will think at this time of their relations to the millions of this great empire who will not do so in times of quietness.

The following discussion aims to set forth the situation in China, not so much as it appears in any one time of critical excitement, but as the enduring factors of the problem which China presents have characterized it from the beginning of China's contact with the West, and will continue to characterize it for years to come. The Taiping rebellion accordingly has not been introduced. Though a gigantic movement, it sank back quietly into the gigantic bosom of the Chinese people. It was a symptom, however, of the mobility of this immobile race, and also in hard historic fact of the

readiness of the Chinese to adopt Christian doctrine and to adapt it, also. The leader of the Taipings was a country school-teacher, a Christian convert. As the movement grew, religious worship was kept up in the camp; the Sabbath was observed; the Scriptures were read and expounded; hymns and doxologies were sung in honor of the Triune God, and the multitudes were exhorted by their leaders to honor and obey God. Hung Siu Chuen soon had his head turned by his military successes, and excess and fanaticism characterized his rebellion. But still as men think upon it and the way it had broken with all the shackles of old thought and old ways in China, they wonder whether the West did well in suppressing it. Dr. W. A. P. Martin who lived through the years of the rebellion in China, cannot rid himself of this doubt. "More than once, when the insurgents were on the verge of success," he has written, "the prejudices of short-sighted diplomatists decided against them, and an opportunity was lost such as does not occur once in a thousand years."[1]

Yet in "slow-moving," "stagnant" China, such an opportunity did come again in less than forty years, in another movement, whose lessons

[1] A Cycle of Cathay, p. 142.

need to be kept in mind in the following discussion, when the Emperor joined the party of the Reformers, led by Kang Yu Wei, and poured out during the year 1898 edict after edict proposing measures which were certain to lead to the renovation of the empire. Railroads unlocking the whole land were approved. Factories and mines were to be promoted. Social reforms were commended, and footbinding was attacked by Viceroy Chang Chih Tung and other officials all over the empire. The country was to be opened; temples were to be changed into Western schools; the right of petition was extended to all; a free press was to be encouraged. The futile and obsolete subjects were to be eliminated from the government examinations and that powerful enginery was to be used to lift the whole nation into new life. But too much had been proposed for the conservative party to endure. The influence of the Western legations would have sufficed to support the Emperor and his advisers, to moderate their projects and to secure a gradual adoption of the proposed reforms, but that influence was withheld.[1] The Reformers fled or were be-

[1] "The pity of it is that the foreign legations, which ought to have jumped at the opportunity, gave no assistance whatever to the Emperor and his reforming friends. . . . No one ever expected that this dynasty could produce a man so worthy to

headed or expatriated, and the Dowager Empress resumed authority. Whether the Emperor is alive or dead no Western man knows.

We have sown our seed and we are reaping our harvest. We preferred the Dowager Empress to the Emperor, and we are enjoying now the spirit of reaction and bigotry which is congenial to her, and the bitter consequences of its supremacy. For, however ripe the poverty of the people in Shantung through the Yellow River floods, and their irritation at the brusque and unconciliatory ways of Germany, may have rendered the province for the spread of the Boxer Movement, it could have been suppressed if the Chinese officials had wished to suppress it. But the West had supinely tolerated if it had not facilitated the victory of conservatism and hostility to foreigners at Peking, and local and provincial officials took their cue from the capital. Undoubtedly the movement has now gone far beyond the will or desire of the Empress and her less fatuous advisers. They fear the reparation which some of the European powers will exact in the spirit of vengeance and wrath.

rule, nor will it ever produce another! Yet he seems to have found not one to help him among the foreign officials in Peking. Reform has no real interest for them. The pity of it!"—Shanghai *Daily News*, Nov. 15, 1898.

And this has been one of the blunders we have made from the beginning in dealing with China. We have not observed equity. Would any civilized state have tolerated the seizure of a section of a province as compensation for the murder of two missionaries? We have spoken of revenge and have exacted it. But it is said "China is not a civilized state." Precisely so. Another blunder of our dealings with China has been that we have not treated her as a civilized state when we should have done so, and have treated her as a civilized state when we should not have done so. We should have recognized in our diplomatic relations with her that though senile and dignified, she is yet a minor and incompetent. The European nations have gone beyond the bounds of proper international intercourse with China, whenever it was to their interest, and have refused to go beyond them when it was to China's interest that they should do so.

There are some who say, however, that the trouble is due to the missionaries. It is not political and it is not commercial. It is religious. Well, it would be folly to deny that missions have produced a profound impression upon China and that they have shaken the superstitions and prejudices of the people in some parts of China

to their foundation. It is interesting to see this recognized by that large class of critics who only recently contended that the missionaries were making no impression at all. But this trouble is not religious in any direct sense. The missionaries are the most widely distributed foreigners in China and they come in contact with hundreds of thousands who never see other foreigners and accordingly they feel more sharply and quickly than any others any outbursts of anti-foreign hostility. Now some of this hostility is undoubtedly due to the doctrines held by the missionaries. Some of these violate some of the immemorial customs and opinions of the Chinese. It would be impossible to carry on in any land such a tremendous propaganda as missions have carried on in China without creating much antagonism. Yet this is easily exaggerated; for the missionaries are tactful. They live among the people. As a simple fact they have the friendship of their neighbors and usually the confidence of the people. They live down prejudice and suspicion. There *is* objection to them on the ground of their religion, although chiefly on the ground of slanderous misconceptions of it, but the chief objection to them is as representatives of the Western political powers. For the former they

must accept full responsibility and bear it quietly, relying upon their message and the Saviour whom they preach. But for the odium in which they may be held as mere *avant couriers* of the political and commercial projects of Western powers they cannot justly be blamed. If any of them have unjustifiably or unwisely appealed for political protection or used political influence, let the individuals bear the responsibility. The enterprise disavows it. It is a spiritual movement. It aims at spiritual results and it proposes spiritual means for their accomplishment. That is all that need be said here regarding the political rights of missionaries.

Yet something more could be said. Surely one of their rights is that their work should not be wrecked by undesired interference. That is a point primarily, however, for the Roman Catholic missionaries. And one of their priests presents it in *Les Missions Catholiques,* June 26, 1891: "It is of no use to hide the fact: China obstinately rejects Christianity. The haughty men of letters are more rancorous than ever; every year incendiary placards call the people to the extermination of the foreign devils; and the day is approaching when this fine Church of China, that has cost so much trouble to the Catholic aposto-

late, will be utterly destroyed, in the blood of her apostles and her children. Whence comes this obstinate determination to reject Christianity? It is not religious fanaticism, for no people are so far gone as the Chinese in scepticism and indifference. One may be a disciple of Confucius or of Lao-tze, Mussulman or Buddhist, the Chinese Government does not regard it. It is only against the Christian religion it seeks to defend itself. It sees all Europe following on the heels of the apostles of Christ, Europe with her ideas, her civilization, and with *that* it will have absolutely nothing to do, being rightly or wrongly, satisfied with the ways of its fathers. The question therefore has much more of a political than a religious character, or rather it is almost entirely political. . . . The efforts of the missionaries should therefore be directed toward separating their cause entirely from all political interests. From this point of view I cannot for my own part but deplore the intervention of European governments. Nothing could in itself indeed be more legitimate, but at the same time nothing could be more dangerous or more likely to arouse the national pride and the hatred of the intellectual and learned classes. . . . Rightly or wrongly, China will not have European civilization which

in combination with Christianity, is to them simply the invasion of Europe. Let us then distinctly separate the religious from the political question."

It is a pity that this priest's views do not represent his Church. No one may know how far the recent expansion of the political rights of Roman Catholic missionaries (an expansion obtained for them, at whose instance I do not know, by the French minister but refused by the Protestant missionaries) practically allowing them to assume judicial functions and to demand of Chinese officials what previously they could only request if they could secure at all, has been responsible for the recent outbreak.

I think I need only emphasize two things in bringing this introduction to a close. First, missions are not responsible for these present difficulties. They produced the Reform Movement. The Reformers acknowledged that. The Emperor himself, it was said, was on the verge of issuing an edict in favor of Christianity. If the Western Powers allowed that to collapse and the reactionary forces to resume control, missions cannot be reprimanded because reaction seized its opportunity. Second, missions, at least responsible Protestant missions, have not been

seeking for political intervention, for enlargement of rights or for the forcible support of their work by the Western powers. As for the agencies which have expressed such desires[1] and have been gratified, let the history of three generations of our intercourse with China speak,—the Opium and the Arrow Wars, and the appropriation of Manchuria and Shantung.

R. E. S.

[1] "The key of the position, which is a politico-commercial one, is that government should be strong, resolute, and inspire confidence. This is absolutely essential. If that be wanting as it has been hitherto, then it is needless to discuss further steps. But, provided such confidence is established, then the British merchant must be encouraged and supported through thick and thin. British enterprise must be pushed inland into every crevice, and every opportunity must be utilized in commercial and industrial matters."—*Colquhoun's China in Transformation*, p. 164.

LECTURE III

CHINA

"THERE are men of that tyrannical school who say that China is not fit to sit at the council board of the Nations, who call them barbarians, who attack them on all occasions with a bitter and unrelenting spirit," said Anson Burlingame in New York, on June 23, 1868, when he was representing the Chinese Government as head of the Embassy which introduced China to the Western world when at last the long closed doors were forced open. And "these things," continued Burlingame, "I utterly deny. I say on the contrary, that that is a great and noble people. It has all the elements of a splendid nationality. It has the most numerous people on the face of the globe; it is the most homogeneous people in the world; its language is spoken by more human beings than any other in the world, and it is written in the rock; it is a country where there is a greater unification of thought than in any other country in the world; it is a country where the maxims of the great sages, coming down memo-

rized, have permeated the whole people until their knowledge is rather an instinct than an acquirement. It is a people loyal while living, and whose last prayer when dying is to sleep in the sacred soil of their fathers. It is a land of scholars and of schools—a land of books, from the smallest pamphlet up to voluminous encyclopedias. It is a land, sir, as you have said, where the privileges are common; it is a land without caste for they destroyed their feudal system two thousand one hundred years ago, and they built up their great structure of civilization on the great idea that the people are the source of power. That idea was uttered by Mencius two thousand years ago, and it was old when he uttered it. The power flows forth from that people into practical government through the coöperative system, and they make scholarship a test of merit. I say it is a great, a polite, a patient, a sober and an industrious people; and it is such a people as this, that the bitter boor would exclude from the council hall of the Nations. It is such a Nation as this that the tyrannical element would put under the ban. They say that all these people (a third [!] of the human race) must become the weak wards of the West; wards of Nations not so populous as many of their provinces; wards

of people who are younger than their newest village in Manchuria. I do not mean to say that the Chinese are perfect; far from it. They have their faults, their pride and their prejudices like other people. These are profound and they must be overcome. They have their conceits like other people, and they must be done away; but they are not to be removed by talking to them with cannon, by telling them that they are feeble and weak, and that they are barbarians." [1]

With these fair words from our countryman of florid speech, the most impressive and curious nation on the earth was introduced to national intercourse with other peoples. She had been talked to with cannon. Otherwise she would have continued to refuse introduction. But the persuasive iron speech of the Opium and Arrow Wars was seductive and the mighty people came out of their seclusion.

I have called China impressive, curious and mighty. These three adjectives belong to China and they belong in the same degree to no other people.

The Chinese people are a mighty people. The idea that they were mighty in war was finally abandoned three years ago, but until the army

[1] Nevius's *China and the Chinese*, p. 453.

and navy of Japan showed how hollow and vain were all the Chinese military and naval pretensions, China was reckoned a sleeping giant who had been not inactively preparing even in sleep for future struggle. Had not Chinese armies conquered the whole heart of Asia? Had they not driven Russia out of the region South of the Amoor? Had they not held the dependencies against all foes? Had they not made the French war in Tonquin a scandal and almost a shame to France? No testing had ever come. What China was or could do was enfolded in mystery. It is not strange that Great Britain looked upon her as her best ally against Russian aggression, and that all the politics of the East turned upon the conviction of China's formidable character as a warlike nation. All this is past now, and the Western people smile at their folly in having been so deceived, and sneer at the pathetic weakness of the Celestial Giant. But this is after the narrow judgment of men whose gods are made of saber slashes and running blood. China's unfitness for the modern science of butchery which we call war, and her weakness in such work, while manifesting the radical defects of incapacity for organization and exact obedience, but bring into clearer relief her mighty adaptation to the

arts of peace, and her genuine power in those spheres which I confess seem to me better spheres for the exercise of power than the fields of organized murder or national land robbery or the lust of pride.

In the more worthy regards China is a mighty nation. No people are more frugal, more contented, more orderly, more patient, more industrious, more filial and respectful among themselves. "They have been for ages the great centre of light and civilization in Central and Eastern Asia. They have given literature and religion to the millions of Korea and Japan." Even a generation of Western civilization has not shaken Chinese influence off the thought and politics and ethics of Japan. Printing originated with the Chinese, and was used by them hundreds of years before it was known in the West. The magnetic needle, gunpowder, silk fabrics, chinaware and porcelain were old tales with the Chinese before our civilization began. Our latest ideas were wrought out by the Chinese ages ago,—Civil Service examinations and assignment of office for merit and tested capacity, trades unions and organizations, the sense of local responsibility in municipal administration. Already numbering one-fourth the population of the earth, China ought to be able,

Dr. Faber says,[1] "comfortably to support at least five times the number of its present inhabitants," taking Germany as a basis of judgment, for the average population of Germany is three times denser than the average population of China, and China's physical and climatic conditions are more favorable than those of Germany, while the Chinese are more frugal than the Germans. In business, manufactures or trade no other people can compete with the Chinese on equal terms. Wherever equal terms prevail, they are driving the foreign merchants out of their markets and ports, and make other labor impossible. And when, as is sure to happen, their own or foreign capitalists drawing raw materials from China, manufacture their cottons, iron, silk, woolens and merchandise in Chinese mills with Chinese labor, those who now regard these Chinese as weak because they cannot fight with guns and ships will recognize that there are other standards than these by which the power of a people is to be gauged.

Perhaps one reason why the Chinese have been so underjudged and certainly one reason for the attitude of contempt and ridicule civilized nations have ever taken toward them is found in their curious peculiarities; for they are, as has been said,

[1] Faber's *China in the Light of History*, p. 2.

the most curious of peoples. But another reason is found in our misunderstanding of them. As Dr. Martin once said, "They are denounced as stolid, because we are not in possession of a medium sufficiently transparent to convey our ideas to them or to transmit theirs to us; and stigmatized as barbarians, because we want the breadth to comprehend a civilization different from our own. They are represented as servile imitators, though they have borrowed less than any other people; as destitute of the inventive faculty, though the world is indebted to them for a long catalogue of the most useful discoveries; and as clinging with unquestioning tenacity to a heritage of traditions, though they have passed through many and profound changes in the course of their history."[1] And we have misunderstood the Chinese in this way not because of any want of will to understand them, but because from our point of view the Chinese character and mind are so perplexing, almost inexplicable. Some have even denied in their confusion that there is a common character or mind. Mr. Henry Norman in *Peoples and Politics of the Far East,* has done so, contending that there is no real unity in China; but those who know China better, hold a differ-

[1] Martin's *The Chinese*, p. 228.

ent view. "China is not," one of them declares, "an immense congeries of polyps each encased in his narrow cell, a workshop and a tomb, and all toiling on without the stimulus of common sympathy or mental reaction. China is not . . . like British India, an assemblage of tribes with little or no community of feeling. It is a unit, and through all its members there sweeps the mighty tide of a common life."[1]

And yet no one has ever described this life. Those who have come nearest to doing so have confessed their failure. They have hit off characteristics but not the character. Mr. Smith frankly calls his book which is the best account of Chinese character we have *Chinese Characteristics*, and one of the fairest as well as shrewdest writers on China, Mr. George Wingrove Cooke, the special correspondent of the London *Times*, with Lord Elgin's Mission, doubted whether the Chinese could be understood and described by the Western mind. "I have in these letters," he wrote, "introduced no elaborate essay upon Chinese character. It is a great omission. . . . The truth is that, I have written several very fine characters for the whole Chinese race, but having the misfortune to have

[1] Martin's *The Chinese*, p. 229.

the people under my eye at the same time with my essay, they were always saying something or doing something which rubbed so rudely against my hypothesis, that in the interest of truth I burned several successive letters. I may add that I have often talked over this matter with the most eminent and candid sinologues, and have always found them ready to agree with me as to the impossibility of a Western mind forming a conception of Chinese character as a whole. These difficulties, however, occur only to those who know the Chinese practically; a smart writer entirely ignorant of his subject might readily strike off a brilliant and antithetical analysis, which should leave nothing to be desired but truth."[1]

Who of us, for example, can honestly appreciate or understand the point of view of a people among whom human life is regarded as these illustrations show? A man throws himself into a canal and is dragged out. But not to be frustrated in this way, simply sits down on the bank and starves himself to death to be revenged against somebody who has cheated him and whose good name will be tarnished in this way. One day, as a Chinese paper relates, a sow be-

[1] Cooke's *China*, p. 7.

longing to a Mrs. Feng, happening to knock down and slightly injure the front door of a Mrs. Wang, the latter at once proceeded to claim damages, which were refused. Whereupon a fierce altercation ensued, which terminated in Mrs. Wang's threatening to take her own life. Mrs. Feng, upon hearing of this direful threat, resolved at once to steal a march upon her enemy by taking her own life, and so bringing trouble and discredit upon Mrs. Wang. She accordingly threw herself into the canal. And these are not uncommon or forced illustrations. They are part of the common routine of life.[1]

And the occasional cruelty of the Chinese is beyond belief. "I know of a case in a wealthy Mandarin's family," writes one old missionary, "where the only grown daughter showing signs of leprosy, a slave girl was bought and butchered, and the patient fed with the flesh of the poor victim."[2] How is this to be understood among a people of high moral standards, and ancient and boasted civilization?

And their government contains equally curious features; men appointed to expensive office without salary and then punished for squeezing; lofty

[1] Norman's *Peoples and Politics of the Far East*, p. 278.
[2] Faber's *Famous Women of China*, p. 4.

political ethics combined with the most corrupt official class in the world; vast numbers of eunuchs, 3,000 in the palace of the Emperor alone, under a system which proclaims the sonless man to be an outcast soul, doomed eternally; a professed atheism, or at best agnosticism combined with the most silly superstitions. This, for example, is one of the decrees for the year 1896, taken from the *Imperial Gazette*, "A shroud inscribed with the T'olo prayers, the work of the Tibetan Buddhist Pontiff, is granted to the deceased noble Tsai Tsin." This is another of less recent date: "Tso Tsung t'ang refers for favorable consideration an application made to him that a certain girl who died in 1469 may be canonized. Wherever rain has failed, prayers offered up at the shrine of the girl angel at Pa-mi-shan have usually been successful. An inquiry into the earthly history of the girl angel shows that she was born in the capital of Kansuh, and during her childhood lived an exemplary life. She was guiltless of a smile or any sort of levity; but, on the contrary, spent the livelong day in doing her duty. Arrived at maidenhood, her mother wished to betroth her, but the girl refused to marry, and betook herself to the Pa-mi hills, where she gave herself up to religious exercise

and nourished herself on spiritual food, until she was transformed into an angel. After she had left this world, the people of the locality found that an appeal to her was invariably answered, and a temple was built in her honor. During the recent dry season, prayers for rain were always granted, thus showing that though hundreds of years have gone by, the maiden still watches over the locality. The memorialist is of opinion that she may well be included in the calendar, and proposes that for the future, sacrifices may be offered to her every spring and autumn. Rescript: Let the Board of Ceremonies report upon the matter."[1] Other edicts provide for the offer of incense to certain gods, the selection of lucky days for various observances, the deification of a certain maiden, etc.

Yet these curious features must not be so exaggerated as to make China appear ludicrous. The West has erred in this. China's great pretensions, her theatricalism, her hypocrisy were understood by all, and her absurdities have been allowed to fill such a place that China has been rather the laughing stock of the nations. But the Chinese are a profoundly impressive people. Nowhere else in the world has the idea of social

[1] Faber's *Famous Women of China*, p. 6.

or family responsibility been so developed. For example, an idiot son murders his father, and an imperial edict records that the son for such a dreadful crime has been punished by slow execution, and that the whole village has been destroyed as sharing in the offence; for had its influence been proper and properly exerted, no boy reared in the village would have committed such a crime. Nowhere else in the world has the idea of filial piety been so emphasized and honored, and it is a wonderful sight to see a whole vast Nation testifying to its real belief in immortality by the annual sacrifices to the spirits of the departed. It is true that the position of woman is subordinate and menial, and that she is valued most as the possible mother of sons. As the Book of Odes says:

"The bears and grisly bears
Are the auspicious intimations of sons;
The cobras and other snakes
Are the auspicious intimations of daughters;
Sons shall be born to them:
They will be put to sleep on couches;
They will be clothed in robes;
They will have sceptres to play with;
Their cry will be loud.
They will be hereafter resplendent with knee-covers,
The future kings, the princes of the land.
Daughters shall be born to them;
They will be put to sleep on the ground;
They will be clothed with wrappers;
They will have tiles to play with.
It will be theirs neither to do wrong nor to do good.
Only about the spirits and the food will they have to think,
And to cause no sorrow to their parents."[1]

[1] Faber's *The Status of Women in China*, p. 5.

And yet marriage has been ever regarded by the Chinese as a sacred institution, and has been carefully defended; and it may be doubted whether in any State, save the Jewish, as much has been made of the family, or it has been so truly the foundation of the State, which the Chinese call the Family of the Nation, while "prefects and magistrates are popularly styled parent officials."[1] And as to this State which has existed for forty centuries, and would exist for forty more if left to its desired seclusion, where in all history can anything more impressive be found than it, or than those great statements of its political science which Confucius framed: "If government is exercised by means of virtue, it is made as steadfast as the North pole. Mere external government (i. e. orders) is opposed to virtue. Filial piety and brotherly love are necessary; besides these two, there are no special rules. Government consists altogether in regulating, i. e. setting to right. This is achieved when the prince is prince, and the minister is minister; when the father is father, and the son is son. But the prince must desire what is good and the people will be good; therefore capital punishment is not necessary. Princes ought to go before the people.

[1] Von Möllendorff's *Family Law of the Chinese*, p. 4.

Then the people follow. The necessary thing is to have sufficiency of food for the people, weapons and confidence. If necessary, weapons can be dispensed with, then food, but without mutual confidence, especially of the people toward the superiors, there is no standing for the State. When those who are near are made glad then those who are far, come themselves. It should be the care of the Government to call everything by its right name, so that no wrong be secreted behind a surreptitious and hypocritical name. Good government depends chiefly upon the excellence of the prince, besides also upon qualified officials, in the election of whom the sovereign must take an interest. If the individual states, as also the imperial domain are swayed in this way, the peaceful order of the whole Empire follows as a matter of course, especially if a virtuous emperor be at the head of it."[1]

Surely it is fitting to apply to this great people the terms mighty, curious, impressive. How in the operations of Providence has such a people been produced, and for what unseen, divine purpose? There are two questions here—the question of origin and the question of destiny.

First, then, the Chinese race is what it is to-day

[1] Faber's *Systematical Digest of the Doctrines of Confucius*, pp. 94-98.

because of its isolation and its education. By her geographical position China has been separated from the whole world, as the Romans said of Britain. The mountains of Tibet rose as an insurmountable wall between China and the great wave of Western conquest which swept away the empires of Babylon and Persia, and later under the Mohammedans established itself for seven centuries in India. On the North and West stretched vast wastes of desert, untrodden and impassable, and the unploughed sea separated the Empire from all contact on the East. The Chinese language seemed yet further to isolate the Nation and to separate the people intellectually from their fellow men; while it also bound those who used it closer together. A phonetic rather than a symbolic language would have led as in Europe, to the development of different languages in different provinces or states, and so would have prevented the growth of a great Chinese race. As it is, geographical isolation shut China off from contact with languages like Sanscrit and Assyrian which would have led to modifications, and ignorant of any approximation to phonetic principles, China grew with one written and literary language, and in the main, a common spoken tongue which were

alike added bonds within and added barriers against those without.[1]

But isolation alone could not have produced the Chinese people. It merely provided those potential conditions in which Chinese education could have free and uninterrupted play upon the nation. As Wells Williams points out, "Their literary tendencies could never have attained the strength of an institution if they had been surrounded by more intelligent nations; nor would they have filled the land to such a degree if they had been forced to constantly defend themselves or had imbibed the lust of conquest. Either of these conditions would probably have brought their own national life to a premature close." In these literary tendencies the moral and social teachings of their great sages and rulers, their systems of education, the real kinetic energy which has fashioned and preserved the Chinese people is to be found. In the Classics compiled by Confucius all wisdom is contained, according to Chinese opinion, and the mastery of these Classics, memorizing them and learning to use their materials according to artificial and fine drawn rules, is preparation for life, training for public office and title to honor and glory. All

[1] Wells Williams' *Middle Kingdom*, Vol. ii., pp. 188–190.

preferment is based on success in the Government examinations in the knowledge and use of the Classics. Some Chinese historians maintain that appointment to office was first conditioned on competitive examinations by the Emperor Shun in the year 2200 B. C. Though this may be doubted, it is certain that now the system penetrates the whole Empire, and thousands and hundreds of thousands, even millions compete for the degrees, the lowest, or "Budding Genius" corresponding rudely to our B. A., the second, "Promoted Scholar" a sort of M. A., the third, "Fit for Office," a sort of D. C. L., or LL. D. To which may be added a fourth, or "Hanlin" degree, by which the successful scholar becomes a member of the Hanlin Academy or "Forest of Pencils." About one per cent. of the rough scholars get the degree of "Budding Genius," and from the fact that 25,000 with this degree will compete at one provincial capital for the second degree, one gains some idea of the number of candidates. About one per cent. of the "Budding Geniuses" become "Fit for Office."[1]

The subjects of these examinations for centuries have of course furnished the staple of

[1] Martin's *The Chinese*, pp. 39-84.

thought of the Chinese people, and the Classics have thus been woven into the very grain and texture of the Chinese race. They have memorized them and the commentaries upon them and have looked upon their absorption and the modelling of life upon them, as the consummation of all duties. How thoroughly they have been expected to do this such questions as these from the examination papers will indicate: "How do the rival schools of Wang and Ching differ in respect to the exposition of the meaning and the criticism of the Book of Changes?" "The art of war arose under Hwang te, forty-four hundred years ago. Different dynasties have since that time adopted different regulations in regard to the use of militia or standing armies, the mode of raising supplies for the army, etc. Can you state these briefly?" Or, note such a subject for an essay as this passage from the Analects of Confucius. "Confucius said, 'How majestic was the manner in which Shun and Yu held possession of the Empire, as if it were nothing to them.' Confucius said, 'Great indeed was Yaou as a sovereign! How majestic was he! It is only Heaven that is grand and only Yaou corresponded to it! How vast was his virtue! The people could find no name for it.'" A few years

ago the University of London admitted to its initial examinations annually about 1,400 candidates, and passed one-half. The Government examinations of China at the same time admitted about 2,000,000 annually, and passed one per cent.[1]

This great device has worked for centuries now. As Dr. Martin has pointed out, "It has served the State as a safety valve, providing a career for those ambitious spirits which might otherwise foment disturbances or excite revolutions. It operates as a counterpoise to the power of an absolute monarch. With it a man of talent may raise himself from the humblest ranks to the dignity of viceroy or premier. It gives the Government a hold on the educated gentry, and binds them to the support of existing institutions." And its influence on the character and opinion of the people has been simply enormous. That "the Chinese may be regarded as the only pagan nation which has maintained democratic habits under a purely despotic theory of Government; that this Government has respected the rights of its subjects by placing them under the protection of law, with its sanctions and tribunals (and keeping them there) and making the sovereign

[1] Idem, pp. 51, 52.

amenable in the popular mind for the continuance of his sway to the approval of a higher Power able to punish him; that it has prevented the domination of all feudal, hereditary and priestly classes and interests by making the tenure of officers of Government below the throne chiefly depend on their literary attainments;"—all this is due to the influence of their educational system and the body of teaching it has ground into the Nation.[1]

On the other hand, the weaknesses and inefficiencies of China to-day are in great measure directly traceable to the same influence and teaching. The literati, "the most influential portion of the population," are the most conservative, bigoted and narrow-minded. "The Chinese have drawn their self-conceit and contempt for all foreigners as barbarians from the ancient works." "The scholar of the first degree," says their proverb, "without going abroad is able to know what transpires under the whole heaven." Confucius lived six centuries before Christ. To make what he knew and the wisdom of those who went before him the total of all available wisdom and to school men into this conviction until it is ineradicable has been one result of the

[1] Wells Williams' *Middle Kingdom*, Vol. ii., p. 191.

Chinese system of education. It has limited knowledge and life to the level of the far past, and has made fidelity to this old antediluvianism the test of all things. Chinese education has isolated China in time as it was of old isolated by language and in space. Confucianism has shown itself as stereotyped and sterile as Islam.

This is not an uncharitable judgment. History and the present evidence of life have passed it. Confucianism has limited the horizon of men to the wisdom of twenty-five centuries ago. "The past is made for slaves," said Emerson, and whatever truth is in his saying applies to the Chinese. Confucianism recognizes no relation to a living God. It relegates all contact with Heaven even to an annual act of the Emperor. It ignores the plainest facts of moral character. It has no serious idea of sin, and indeed no deeper insight at all. It cannot explain death. It holds truth of light account. It presupposes and tolerates polygamy and sanctions polytheism. It confounds ethics with external ceremonies and reduces social life to tyranny. It rises at the highest no higher than the worship of genius, the deification of man.[1]

Indeed the Chinese themselves long ago passed

[1] Faber's *Systematical Digest of the Doctrine of Confucius*, pp. 124–131.

judgment upon the inadequacy of Confucianism, and with that utter disregard of logical consistency which is another of their inexplicable divergences from the ways of the West, added to their Confucian beliefs the most un-Confucian ideas of Taoism and Buddhism. The Chinese have never been capable, however, of holding either of these religions in even an approximately pure form. Taoism was in Lao Tse's hands a high transcendental idealism, but his followers reduced it to alchemy and necromancy. Buddhism was a sort of atheistic mysticism, but in China it became a system of magic or spiritual thaumaturgy. Any line of division between these two became obscured, and both were absorbed by the Chinese to supply in a measure those spiritual longings which Confucianism had been futile to suppress, and to which it had no ministry. But Taoism and Buddhism while having firm hold upon the Nation, and tinging the life of every man, supplying those elements of superstition and real religion which the agnosticism of Confucianism ignored, have never been able to shake the older system, and have not modified in the direction of enlightenment and broader sympathy the education of the Chinese race. Isolated at the beginning, twenty-five centuries of narrow-

ing discipline have separated the Chinese by a mighty chasm from other Nations and the sweep of human progress, holding them

> "Aloof from our mutations and unrest
> Alien to our achievements and desires."

It is not at all strange that people of such a character and education should have assumed toward the rest of the world the attitude they have. Before the Western Nations molested them, their Empire was the mistress of all. The little kingdoms round about she treated with patronage or contempt. When the Western Nations came, she judged them by her dependent tribes, and spoke to them as she had spoken to her tributary neighbors. "She assumed a tone of superiority, pronounced them barbarians and demanded tribute." This was due to her ignorance and conceit. Her conceit abides, and it is to be feared, so also does her ignorance. Thus the author of *China's Intercourse with Europe* wherein the facts are given from the Chinese point of view, says, "As for the petty States of the German Zollverein . . . many of them are unknown even by name in the historical and geographical works accessible to us, and we have no means of establishing the fact of their alleged existence!"[1] A

[1] *China's Intercourse with Europe*, p. 114.

correspondent of the London *Times* recently told of a conversation with some Chinese officials on the Tibetan border, in which reference was made to the capture of Peking in 1862 by the French and English. "Yes," said the officials laughing, "we know you said you went there, and we read with much amusement your gazettes giving your account of it all. They were very cleverly written and we dare say deceived your own subjects into a belief that you actually went to Peking. We often do the same thing."[1] And even in the famous memorial which was presented in 1895, signed by 1,300 scholars who had taken the second degree and represented fourteen out of the Eighteen Provinces of China, and which urged a number of reforms, the establishment of banks and post offices, railways, encouragement of machinery, mining, newspapers, education, etc., the following sentences occur, showing the most naïve ignorance of the world. "Let the most advanced students of Confucianism be called up by the Emperor to the capital and given the Hanlin degree and funds to go abroad. If they succeed in establishing schools in foreign countries where are gathered 1,000 pupils, let them be ennobled. Thus we shall take

[1] Norman's *Peoples and Politics of the Far East*, p. 286.

Confucianism and with it civilize all the barbarians, and under the cloak of preaching Confucianism, travel abroad and quickly learn the motives of the barbarians and extend the fame of our country."

These words of the 1,300 scholars indicate another element of China's training and of the present situation. Not only are the Chinese a mighty, curious and impressive people whom Western Nations have misunderstood and despised, but the Chinese have also misunderstood as well as despised the Western peoples. Those same features of their character and education which make them so unintelligible to us make us unintelligible to them. The memorial of the 1,300 scholars proposes that Confucian missionaries be sent both to civilize the barbarians of the West, and to learn just what our motives are. From the Chinese point of view, these seem to me to be eminently just and reasonable propositions. And even from an unbiased and intermediate point of view it must be acknowledged that a candid comparison of Western and Chinese civilizations does not leave everything to be said on one side. With a pure Christian civilization Confucian civilization could not stand comparison for a moment, but it can have its own word to

say in any controversy with our actual present stage of civilization in the West. And as to Chinese confusion as to the real motives of Western Nations, who can wonder that they are an enigma to the Chinese? Are they not to us? Who can disentangle the sincere from the selfish and false? "Your code of morals is defective in one point," said Li Hung Chang once, "it lays too much stress on charity and too little on justice." Who can reconcile the professed motives of the Mission movement with the obvious purposes of European Governments? We know they are irreconcilable and do not try, but they are the double face of a single party to the Chinese. Besides he cannot understand the restlessness of the West, its unwillingness to stay at home, its constant spirit of disturbance, of change, the lust of innovation, its domineering impetuousness, its obtrusiveness, its irritating refusal to let China alone. Nor could we understand these things if we were in the place of the Chinese. Indeed even in our own place much of our spirit and of the spirit of our Western peoples is unintelligible to us, save as the inherited genius of the race, and much of it as displayed in dealings with Oriental Nations from Turkey to China is as a foul stench in our nostrils.

Here then have been all the elements of a most interesting situation which has altered but slightly since the gates of China were forced about fifty years ago. On one side a Nation numbering one-fourth of the human race, not comprehending, heartily despising the Western Nations, desiring to be let alone and to live on in the ancient ways of the sages. On the other, the forceful Nations of the West not comprehending China, viewing her ludicrously and with contempt, but insisting on intercourse, on equal terms, and demanding that China should forego her desire for seclusion and open to the world. This struggle and the forces which have entered into it, have constituted the last of the influences which have produced the China of our present history, until within the last few months the European Nations have threatened the integrity of the Eighteen Provinces. The want of proportion in our historical knowledge is in nothing more clearly shown than in our ignorance of the steps in this great struggle, especially of the real character and meaning of the Opium and Arrow Wars. The average student knows only, as the current oratory runs: "that Great Britain forced opium on helpless and protesting China at the mouth of her cannon," and scarcely stops to think of the deeper significance

of those acts in the great movement which had to do with the welfare and destiny of one-fourth of the human race, yes and the welfare and destiny of perhaps two-fourths more. The first war, 1839-1842, opened the five treaty ports of Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai, ceded Hong Kong to Great Britain, authorized trade and recognized foreigners. "Looked at in any point of view," says the most solid writer on China, "political, commercial, moral or intellectual, it will always be considered as one of the turning points in the history of mankind, involving the welfare of all nations in its wide-reaching consequences. . . . It was extraordinary in its origin, as growing chiefly out of a commercial misunderstanding; remarkable in its course as being waged between strength and weakness, conscious superiority and ignorant pride; melancholy in its end as forcing the weaker to pay for the opium within its borders against all its laws, thus paralyzing the little moral power its feeble Government could exert to protect its subjects; and momentous in its results as introducing, on a basis of acknowledged obligations, one-half of the world to the other, without any arrogant demands from the victors, or humiliating concessions from the vanquished. It was a turning-point in the national life of the

Chinese race."[1] The second war, 1857–1860, grew out of an occurrence of a most trivial character, and was marked by the pursuit of the most petty, private and even unjustifiable ends;[2] but it resulted in the opening of nine more treaty ports; it conceded the right to travel throughout the Eighteen Provinces, and contained a special clause giving protection to foreigners and natives in the propagation and adoption of the Christian religion.

Now although troubles over opium were the occasion of the first war, the real issues were general trade intercourse and reciprocal and equal diplomatic relations as necessary thereto. "The merchants of Great Britain," said Lord Napier before the war, "wish to trade with all China on principles of mutual benefit; they will never relax their exertions till they gain a point of equal importance to both countries, and the viceroy will find it as easy to stop the current of the Canton River as to carry into effect the insane determinations of the Hong," (to resist these trade advances). Opium was an accident and not an essential of the wars. As a Chinese writer has said in a novel account of this matter, "It is plain that it

[1] Wells Williams' *Middle Kingdom*, Vol. ii., pp. 463, 464.
[2] Martin's *A Cycle of Cathay*, pp. 143–190.

was not the destruction of the opium, but the stoppage of trade, which caused these wars. . . . This was sufficient to disappoint and provoke men who had come thousands of miles for the sake of gain. . . . Worms only appear in a rotten carcase, and it was only when exaction followed exaction and justice was denied to creditors, that the foreigners turned upon us. War would have followed all the same even if the opium trade had been stopped; and in fact opium only came because profits being impossible by fair, the foreigners were driven to obtain them by foul means. Some people argue that it was the granting of trade in the first instance that brought on our troubles. But this is absurd; for China can do without foreigners, whilst foreigners are dependent upon us for tea and rhubarb, and therefore are at our mercy. All that is wanted is fair trade to secure their willing loyalty."[1] But it was not trade only. It was also the recognition of equality and respect that the Western Nations demanded. This the Chinese officials had contemptuously refused. "The great ministers of the Chinese Empire . . . are not permitted to have intercourse with outside bar-

[1] Parker's *Chinese Account of the Opium War*, and *China's Intercourse with Europe*, p. 55.

barians," said the Viceroy of Canton to the English Envoy. In reporting the matter to Peking, the Canton Governor said, "On the face of the envelope (which the barbarian Envoy presented) the forms and style of equality were used, and there were absurdly written the characters 'Great English Nation.' Now it is plain on the least reflection, that in keeping the central and outside people apart, it is of the highest importance to maintain dignity and sovereignty. Whether the said barbarian has or has not official rank there are no means of thoroughly ascertaining. But though he be really an officer of the said Nation, he yet cannot write letters on equality with frontier officers of the Celestial Empire." Later the Governor issued a paper deprecating the disturbance of trade and saying, "Lord Napier's previous opposition necessarily demands such a mode of procedure, and it would be most right immediately to put a stop to buying and selling. But considering that the said Nation's King has hitherto been in the highest degree reverently obedient, he cannot in sending Lord Napier at this time have desired him thus obstinately to resist. The some hundreds of thousands of commercial duties yearly coming from the said country concern not the Celestial Empire the extent of a hair or a

feather's down. . . . But the tea, the rhubarb, the raw silk of the Inner Land, are the sources by which England's people live and maintain life. For the fault of one man, Lord Napier, must the livelihood of the whole Nation be precipitately cut off? . . . I cannot bring my mind to bear it."[1] And this tone of contempt and insult continued without exception or relief. What could Western Nations do in the face of it? They could quietly go home and abandon trade with China save on terms of inferiority. China wondered that they so persistently refused to do this. But the passion for trade, and the trade God who rules the diplomacy of nations was fiercer even in Western Nations than among the Chinese. They would trade, and they would trade on terms of self-respect, and to accomplish that in this century could only be done by war, and war that meant to China disgrace, the withdrawal of insult, the abandonment of her traditional attitude and the destruction of her isolated seclusion, and that could only leave with her ruling class the sting of defeat, the sense of doom and a bitter hatred of that restless, encroaching force that tears men away from the slavery of the past and thrusts

[1] Wells Williams' *Middle Kingdom*, Vol. ii., pp. 468, 472.

them out into the future, like Abraham, not knowing whither they go.

This roughly is the general situation, and so much of history has been set forth in it because in China every present situation contains the past as its chief element. What is to grow out of this situation? Whither is God leading the Chinese? Is their day spent, their history done, or is there yet hope for them?

First, there is no hope for them in Confucianism. It has had free scope for twenty-five centuries, and while it has accomplished the results that have been recognized, it contains absolutely no hope for the future. Progress is impossible under it. It ties the race hand and foot and flings it back into a patriarchal dotage. As to Buddhism, while its superstitions and idols supply what they can to meet the irrepressible spiritual needs of the people, its priests, as Eitel says, "Are mostly recruited from the lowest classes, and one finds among them frequently the most wretched specimens of humanity, more devoted to opium smoking than any other class in China. They have no intellectual tastes, they have centuries ago ceased to cultivate the study of Sanscrit, they know next to nothing about the history of their own religion, living together mostly

in idleness, and occasionally going out to earn some money by reading litanies for the dead, or acting as exorcists and sorcerers or physicians. No community of interest, no ties of social life, no object of generous ambition, beyond the satisfying of those wants which bind them to the cloister, diversify the monotonous current of their daily life," while "the people as a whole have no respect for the Buddhist Church and habitually sneer at the Buddhist priests."[1] As for Taoism the high and noble views of Lao Tse have sunk to the lowest oracularism, and its superstitions are only a grade below those of Buddhism with which now in China it is inextricably interwoven. The most pitiably abject human being I ever saw was a Taoist priest, with long matted hair run through with straws, half naked, begging in the streets of Peking. In her own religions, there is no hope for China.

Nor is there any in her political and civil institutions. They are rotten through and through, though sufficient for her old life and isolation, but she is not allowed her old life and isolation any longer. The introduction of mathematics and Western sciences and even questions as to the Bible into the competitive examinations, the throb of the railway past the graves of the

[1] Eitel's *Buddhism*, pp. 33, 34.

sages, the profile of the telegraph against the dragon outline of the hills, the hum of the spindle in the cotton mills, and engines in the silk factories, and the ramifying filaments of Western trade introduce conditions for which the old forms and the old officials are unfit. It will be enough if they can keep up with the new times. There is no leading in them.

And although we believe that God is in His heaven and all's well with His world, and that the conduct of European nations in China at the present time will in the end work into His mighty purposes, and indeed is working into those purposes even now, this seems to me a disheartening quarter to which to turn for help and hope. Mr. Curzon may entertain the curious fancy of a secular redemption. "The best hope of salvation for the old and moribund in Asia, the wisest lessons for the emancipated and new, are still to be derived from the ascendency of British character, and under the shelter, where so required, of British dominion."[1] But where is the redemptive power that has regenerated Hong Kong and Singapore? And how much salvation has come to Shanghai from Foochow Road? Has French rule brought hope to Tonquin? Has Spain given

[1] Curzon's *Problems of the Far East*, new ed., p. 15.

help to the Philippines? Wherein has Borneo been redeemed by the Dutch or Bokhara by the Russians? If the real partition of China comes, as it may, and Russia takes Manchuria and Chili, and Germany Shantung, and England the valleys of the Yangtse and the West Rivers, and the whole body and heart of China lying between, and France Hainan and the southern section of Kwangtung and Kwang Si and Yunnan,[1]—it will mean good I am sure, though what an ignominious end of the Middle and Heavenly Kingdom it will be!—but it is not the direction in which one turns for help or hope, especially with the sounds of trade so filling the air, the clamor of the navies and the shouts of Prince Henry preaching the gospel of the consecrated person of the queer Emperor of Germany, and William's Minister of Foreign Affairs saying in the *Reichstag* "that Germany could no longer exclude herself from sharing the promising new markets. That the time had passed when Germany was content to look on and see other countries dividing the world among them, while Germany contented herself with a place in heaven. The intentions of Germany toward China were benevolent . . . but Germany could not permit China to treat

[1] Martin's *Cycle of Cathay*, p. 399.

German interests as subordinate to those of other nations." And the speaker concluded, the cable dispatch said, "amid long and loud applause by saying 'We will not put other people in the shade, but we claim for ourselves a place in the sun.'" That was a pertinent prayer of the Queen's Jubilee:—

"If drunk with sight of power we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boastings as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget.

"For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord."

Yet it must be admitted that the tumult of the Captains and the Kings seems to the people to be the force supreme. And it may make very visible changes on the maps and create new names for the histories and for a generation seem to be controlling character and life, but the long view of history and the deeper insight will lead us to look further still for any permanent source of help and hope for China. For those forces are the greatest which most affect character. Confucianism is so powerful and so hopeless because of its enormous influence upon the character of

the people. Determinations of territorial boundaries and assignments of political authority are minor and insignificant in comparison with the forces which run down to the roots of personal life. And of these forces time will show that none is running deeper or spreading more widely than Christianity.

Christianity was first brought to China by the Nestorians early in the sixth century, and the only known traces of their work are preserved in the famous Nestorian tablet found in the Province of Shansi in 1725. The Roman Catholics began their work in the thirteenth century, and with glorious devotion, and some readiness to temporize, to flatter, to dissemble and to deceive. Their work grew greatly, winning at last the favor of the Emperor Kanghi until Clement XI. joined issue with him over ancestral worship and some other ceremonies, and then the missionaries were expelled from the country. From 1767 to 1820 they were persecuted, ordered to leave or slain, but continued apparently to conduct themselves in the manner of which one of their own number, Pere Repa complained, saying, "If our European missionaries in China would conduct themselves with less ostentation[1] and accommo-

[1] Vid. also Monseigneur Reynoud's *Another China*, p. 39, which is a Roman Catholic view.

date their manners to persons of all ranks and conditions, the number of converts would be immensely increased. Their garments are made of the richest materials . . . and as they never mix with the people, they make but few converts." As a matter of fact, however, they have made many converts and doubtless many good Christians. Protestant Missions began with Morrison in 1807, and together with Roman Catholic Missions were recognized and legalized by the treaties made after the war of 1860. Article VIII. of the British treaty reads "The Christian religion as professed by Protestants or Roman Catholics inculcates the practice of virtue and teaches men to do as they would be done by. Persons teaching it or professing it, therefore, shall alike be entitled to the protection of the Chinese authorities; nor shall any such, peaceably pursuing their calling, and not offending against the laws, be persecuted or interfered with."

Thus introduced and recognized two things have prevented Christianity's exercise of its full power One has been the difficulty of adjusting it to the Chinese mind in such a way as not to commit it to anything unessential which is repugnant to the Chinese mind, and to fit it precisely to the fundamental spiritual needs and ca-

pacities of the race. I asked one of the ablest missionaries in China, what were the great problems of the work in China, and he replied instantly, "They are one—How to present Christ to the Chinese mind." There is nothing else on earth like that mind, so full of distortions, of atrophies, of abnormalities, of curious twists and deficiencies, and how to avoid all unnecessary prejudice and difficulty, and to make use of prepared capacity and notion so as to gain for the Christian message the most open and unbiased reception, is a problem unsolved as yet and beyond any of our academic questionings here. For example, the Chinese idea of filial piety has in it much that is Christian and noble and true, and yet much that is absurd and untrue. To recognize and avail of the former aspects and not to alienate and anger in stripping off the latter, is one phase of this problem. Where is there one more wonderfully interesting and more baffling?

The second thing that has hampered Christianity has been its political entanglements. The last few months have given a characteristic illustration of this. The murder of two German missionaries in Shantung province was at once made the pretext of seizing a bay with its protecting fortifications, and bade fair to precipitate

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the dismemberment of the Chinese Empire. Is it wonderful that the Chinese distrust the character of the Mission movement, are sceptical as to its non-political character, and view Christianity with suspicion? China has disliked the Western Nations from the start. Their overbearing willfulness, their remorseless aggression, their humiliating victories, their very peccable diplomacy have all strengthened her dislike. The unfortunate occasion of the first war which brought Great Britain forward as the defender of the wretched opium traffic, which the Chinese Central Government at least was making sincere efforts to suppress, placed the Western Nations in the position of supporting by arms what China knew to be morally wrong. The general bearing of the foreign commercial class, ignorant of the language, of the people and of their prejudices has increased the anti-foreign feeling of the Chinese yet more. The charge that the missionary movement as a religious movement is responsible for the anti-foreign feeling is fantastic and it is not supported by facts. Missions have made a hundred friends to every foe.

The missionary would undoubtedly in any event have had to share some of this hatred, as a member of one of the objectionable na-

tionalities; but the Chinese are capable of distinctions, and would soon have learned that the Mission movement was sharply distinct from all political bearings, if indeed it had been so. But from the beginning of foreign intercourse, the trader and the missionary have been classed together. The same rights have been claimed for each, and the claim was enforced by war in the case of the trader, and the consequent treaties included the missionary. Ever since, through the legations, missionary rights under the treaties have perhaps been the chief matter of business, and outrages on missionaries have been followed by demands for reparation and indemnity. No Government was willing to surrender its duty to protect its citizens, and even if the missionaries had refused protection, it would have been forced on them for the sake of maintaining traditional prestige, and defending traders and trade interests from assault.

In consequence, the missionary work has been unable to appear as the propaganda of a kingdom that is not of this world. The Chinese officials are unable, with few exceptions, to conceive of it except as a part of the political scheme of Western Nations to acquire influence in China, and to subvert the Government and the principles

of loyalty on which it rests. "It is our opinion that foreign missionaries are in very truth the source whence springs all trouble in China," so says one of the Chinese "Blue Books." "Foreigners come to China from a distance of several ten thousands of miles, and from about ten different countries with only two objects in view; namely, trade and religious propagandism. With the former they intend to gradually deprive China of her wealth, and with the latter they likewise seek to steal away the hearts of her people. The ostensible pretext they put forward is, the cultivation of friendly relations: what their hidden purpose is, is unfathomable."[1] Even a Roman Catholic priest, and his people are the worst offenders in this, writes: "Whence comes this obstinate determination to reject Christianity? It is not religious fanaticism, for no people are so far gone as the Chinese in scepticism and indifference. One may be a disciple of Confucius or of Lao Tse, Mussulman or Buddhist, the Chinese Government does not regard it. It is only against the Christian religion it seeks to defend itself. It sees all Europe following on the heels of the Apostles of Christ, Europe with her ideas, her civilization, and with *that* it will have absolutely

[1] Michie's *China and Christianity*, p. 101.

nothing to do, being rightly or wrongly satisfied with the ways of its fathers."[1]

Out of a very profound ignorance of the subject of Missions in China, Mr. Henry Norman, after alluding to "the minute results of good and the considerable results of harm" they produce, says, "At any rate, in considering the future of China, the missionary influence cannot be counted upon for any good."[2] I believe that its affiliations with the political and commercial schemes of the West, which are Mr. Norman's deities, and the way France and Germany make it a cat's-paw are seriously hindering it from doing its purely spiritual work; but even with this hindrance and the difficulty of a wise adjustment to the Chinese mind, with its aptitudes and incapacities, it is the most penetrating and permeating force working in China to lead her on to the new day, and its messengers are the heralds of the dawn. "Believe nobody when he sneers at them," said Colonel Denby. "The man is simply not posted." The 1,300 scholars, whose memorial I have already quoted, know better than to sneer. "Every province is full of chapels," they wrote, "whilst we have only one temple in each county

[1] Michie's *Missionaries in China*, p. 67.
[2] Norman's *Peoples and Politics of the Far East*, pp. 280-282, 304-308.

for our sage Confucius. Is this not painful? Let religious instruction be given in each county. Let all the charitable institutions help. Let all the unowned temples and charity guilds be made into temples of the Confucian religion, and thus make the people good, and stop the progress of strange doctrines." When Bishop Moule, who is still living at Hangchow, came to China, there were only forty Protestants in the Empire. Now there are 80,000, and in addition the multitudes enrolled in the Church of Rome. They are erring who are not reckoning with the powerful work the Christian Church is doing amid the foundations of the Chinese Empire. She blows few trumpets from the housetops. She boasts with no naval displays. Her trust is not put in reeking tube and iron shard. Guarding she calls on God to guard, and under His guarding is doing at the roots of Chinese life the work of the new creation, and out of her work a Church is rising of a new sort. It will have its own heresies and trials, but it will have elements of power which have belonged to none of God's other peoples; and I think it will lean back on the rock of the rule of the Living God which we are abandoning for the rule of our own wills. And whether the Chinese race shall serve the future as one nation or as the peaceful

and submissive fragments of a once mighty Empire, this much is true:—the service they will render will have been touched by Christ whose movement will go on "until all the cities, towns, villages and hamlets of that vast Empire have the teacher and professor of religion living in them, until their children are taught, their liberties understood, their rights assured, their poor cared for, their literature purified, and their condition bettered in this world by the full revelation of another made known to them,"[1] out of which One has come greater than Confucius, greater than Lao Tse, to dwell among men and be their Living King.

[1] Wells Williams' *Middle Kingdom*, Vol. ii., p. 371.

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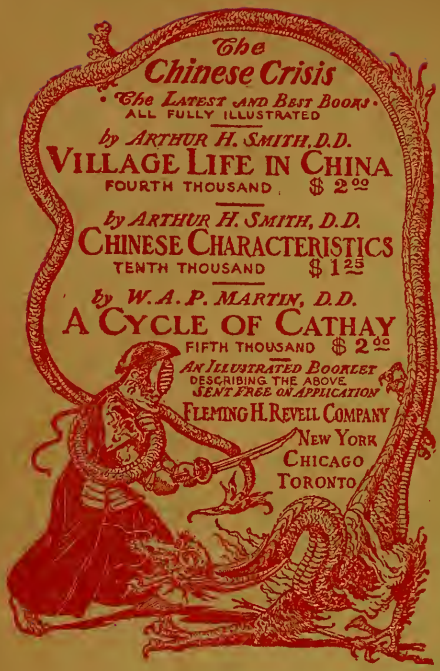

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